[115 cont.]

436 money itself (1). The pieces of money seen and collected by

1. Edge-Partington, I, 165, Nos. 1, 2; 163, Nos. 2-4.

European travelers were all old, usually so old that the parrot-feather trimming had become insignificant or invisible and the specimens looked like old leather straps (2). During spe-

2. Coote, p. 155. Director Foy tells me that well-preserved, that is, new specimens are to be found in the museum in Cambridge.

•[556] cial festivities the pieces belonging to the host are displayed at the place where the festivities are held. According to Codrington, there are also shorter pieces for daily use, but in former times shell money probably served for this purpose.
[583] The bride price is paid exclusively in feather money (3).

3. Codrington, p. 239. Joest in Baessler, p. 379.

802 It is in keeping with the commercial talents of the natives that they can easily count up to 100,000, according to Joest. When they count with their hands, they compute with the fingers bent; thus the closed fist with the thumb tucked under means five, with one finger outstretched, four, and so forth. Joest did not find them counting with their feet (4). Markham mentions a sort of knotted string made of

4. Joest in Baessler, p. 393.

strips of palm leaf, which he interprets as a counting device. When the body of Bishop Patteson was returned, the string
[764] was found in the folds of the tapa in which the corpse was
000 wrapped. According to Markham's interpretation, the five

595 [141 cont.] of rank" [cited in English] practice polygamy. In view of the marriage preliminaries described, however, wealth is apparently the most important aspect of rank.

•[556]

606 A marriage establishes a large number of restrictions in the intercourse of the kin groups related by marriage. The most strict, as among many peoples, are the regulations about the association of the mother-in-law with the son-in-law. They may not see each other or speak to each other; he is not permitted to mention her name, and vice versa. Even words in which the forbidden name occurs must be avoided. [142] If they should meet, the mother-in-law must step aside if she wants to avoid punishment (1). The prohibition affects the

1. Joest in Baessler, p. 382.

father-in-law only with respect to the mentioning of the name (2).

2. O'Ferrall, p. 224.

602 On the other hand, the prohibition against saying the name and looking applies to all those who shared in the purchase price, that is, all the members of the kin group that has become related by marriage. A violation of the regulation entitles the
607 man to destroy part of the goods of the culprit. If a man and a woman are involved for example, if brother-in-law and sister-in-law meet, the woman is obliged to turn her back or to cover her face. If she should not do this, her kin group would have to pay the man a fine (3).

3. Joest in Baessler, p. 382, and Tagebuch, p. 60 (nothing is said in the original text of the journal as to whether the prohibition against

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/191 cont./

436

with a piece of tortoise shell and the cord-plaiting, tapering to a point, with Coix fruits. -- See also Speiser, Südsee, p. 294.]

One roll is said /192/ to contain 1,600 small plates (1); their

1. [According to Jennings, ibid., a roll of feather money is said to be two fathoms long.]

value decreases with age. A new roll is worth two large pigs or a girl. The new pieces, carefully wrapped in tapa [and [574] probably also placed in a bag], are kept in the houses [on the platform above the fire pit (2) and are displayed to each guest

2. [Jennings, ibid.; O'Ferrall, section "Historical Sketch." According to the former, smoke and heat are supposed to be protection against mold and insects.]

with pride. Through the constant rolling and unrolling, however, they wear out in the course of generations, and as the red feathers are lost their value decreases; old pieces that show almost no red are no longer valued very highly. /Fig. 35 appears here./ [A wealthy man sometimes /Fig. 36 appears here/ [556] erects a special hut in the bush for his feather money (3). When

3. [Cf. also O'Ferrall, ibid. (= Coombe, p. 189). On how the red feathers are obtained (see above, pp. 79 f.), he remarks that the living birds, hanging from the belts, are brought home and, after the red feathers have been plucked out, are set free.]

the feather money is put on show, it is loosely wound on a

[Text continues on p. 89--analyst]

/197 cont./

786 [912] small stick or a Pteropus bone as a net needle. The cord /198/ is strung onto this needle in loops (Fig. 45, Nos. 1 and 2) which slip off easily as the cord is used. During the plaiting the smaller nets are stretched with the great toe. The making of the knots is shown in Fig. 45, No. 3.

Political Affairs; War

Graebner's assumption (1) that the importance of the

1. [Ethn., I, p. 130.]

622 556 [623] chief has decreased in recent times seems to be correct. I did not meet a true chief, and apparently all the men of a village decide questions of external policy. Nevertheless, there must be leaders, but they are merely the most important and the wealthiest men of a village, with no other position than that of a village elder, of a chairman in the men's house (2). They

2. [Dr. Speiser herewith verifies his assumption in Südsee, p. 299. This is probably also what O'Ferrall, section "Historical Sketch," means when he speaks of two or more chiefs in each village.]

can hardly give direct orders, but they are the nominal owners of the dance areas and the men's houses; also, their indirect influence may be considerable because of their wealth. Moreover, they sometimes indulge in the luxury of having wives in [595] several villages, thus traveling from one village to another, and therefore have influence over extensive areas. As prominent men, after death they are shown the honors that were formerly bestowed on the chiefs.

628 000 Feuds between villages used to be very frequent and are not rare even today. The cause is almost always the

/205.cont./

Religion, Games, Music

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I could not learn anything about religious beliefs (2).

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2. [Ethn., I, pp. 147 ff. See also Coombe, pp. 190 ff. On malete (as magical power is called on Santa Cruz) O'Ferrall, section "Historical Sketch," says that only through it does a man be-

[556]

[532]

Fig. 50. Wooden figure (Ba V 1911), black painting on white background; 51 cm. high.

come rich. Certain persons possess stones with malete, which they also lend (Coombe, p. 191).]

346 The so-called spirit-houses seem to be limited to Tumotu and the Reef Islands (3).

3. [However, cf. Ethn., I, pp. 89 f., 94, and above, p. 48, footnote 4, --

3:Davenport E-5 (1950-1960)1962
CN13 Santa Cruz CN13

[+95(B)]

436 One of the most exotic kinds of money in the world today is a belt two inches wide and 30 feet long made of glue, fibers and feathers, particularly the downy red feathers [237] [825] plucked from the breast, head and back of a tropical forest bird. The red-feather currency of the Santa Cruz Islands of the southwest Pacific nonetheless fits the most rigorous definition of [556] the term "money." It serves as a means of accumulating wealth and as a universal medium of exchange in the highly diversified commerce that flows among these islands. The currency itself is fully interchangeable, each belt having a precisely negotiable value in terms of other [177] belts. Against the recent invasion of the Australian pound, moreover, the red-[583] feather money has kept its integrity. It is still the only acceptable specie for the purchase of brides, fine pigs and certain forms of labor.

121 436 This improbable currency demonstrates that the use of money is not an economic sophistication limited to high civilizations. Many, but by no means all, primitive peoples have devised moneys of their own. Although the forms of the currencies are as diverse as any of man's inventions—running the gamut of animal, vegetable and mineral matter in the live, raw and processed states—the maintenance of these so-called primitive monetary systems requires the balancing of the same equation of supply and demand that confronts the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve System.

435 436 121 If a currency is to serve as a common denominator of value, its value in turn must be carefully regulated. This is one of the most delicate operations in the management of a modern state. It involves adjustment of the demand for as well as supply of money, achieved by control over both the flow and the production of the currency. To a certain ex-

438 463 canoe building, weaving, the manufacturing of bark cloth, tools and ornaments—and currency making—are indigenous to one or another small island or to one village on an island. Each of these specialized industries and crafts is regarded by its practitioners as a right inherited in the family line, and only [428] individuals in the proper line of succession may manufacture currency,' go shark fishing, build canoes or follow any other trade.

438 This primitive division of labor requires in many instances that raw or semiprocessed materials be brought from one district or island to another, where the goods are finished for local consumption or for export. In the busy 437 commerce of the interisland economy goods are rarely bartered. They are sold for currency: feather money or, increasingly, Australian currency. For all who participate the motivation of this trade goes beyond the exchange of necessities and native luxuries; the islanders buy and sell for the express purpose of making money. The accumulation of money ● 556 is the way to prestige. But since the currency itself is perishable, prestige finds its tangible expression in spending as well as in accumulation, above all in helping to buy brides for members of one's family and friends and in giving [642] feasts. Prestige won in these ways is the source of political power and authority.

436 [438] [675] The red-feather currency is made only on Santa Cruz Island. It is made on contract for a specific purchaser, who negotiates individually with the three different hereditary specialists whose combined skills are required for its [463] manufacture. The first specialist snares the little jungle bird whose down sup-

438 102

1 EXPORTERS OF WOMEN
2 NAVIGATORS AND TRADERS
3 ARBORICULTURE
4 PIG BREEDING
5 SHARK FISHING
6 SPECIALIZED CRAFTS
7 TARO GROWING

——— RED-FEATHER CURRENCY
——— WOMEN [W]
——— GOODS AND PRODUCE
O FEATHERS AND SHINGLES
● CURRENCY BINDING

438 certain districts of Santa Cruz Island, circulates there and in the Reefs and Duffs.

[497 (A)]

dant sandy areas where coconuts can be grown to feed them; taro production with a special type of soil; and types of arboriculture with rainfall zones and forestry cover.

As implied by this individual and regional specialization, there is a complex system of trade through which these products are distributed. But this trade is far more than a means of conveying products of one area to another. It is a system in which all those who participate do so with the intention of making a profit. It is real commerce, and the wealth amassed in this way is expended in bride prices, maturation feasts, rituals, and entertainments through which the initiators and organizers derive prestige. In the familiar Melanesian pattern, prestige, wealth, and authority are but three aspects of the same thing, namely, the political system.

While goods of many kinds flow in several directions, there are some goods which move only in specific directions, and which are basic to the entire system. One of these is feather currency, in terms of which all transactions are made. This is an all-purpose currency, and it is made only on Santa Cruz Island. Its manufacture demands the combined skills of three different hereditary specialists. The currency itself is a belt, six fathoms long, about two inches wide, and made of feathers, fiber, and cord. The feathers are the red down from the breast, head, and back of a small honeysucker *(Myzomela cardinalis)*. Catching these birds in the forest and plucking the down from them is one of the specialties. The second specialty consists of pasting the red down onto platelets or shingles made of ordinary wood pigeon *(Columba* sp.) feathers with the sticky sap taken from the fruit of the paper mulberry *(Broussonetia papyrifera)*. The third specialist binds these shingles onto a cord foundation to make the finished belt. A piece of finished currency has one surface of red down and an undersurface which shows only the binding. The feathered surface, made up of overlapping shingles, sometimes resembles the flexible scutes of a snake.

Feather currency is perishable, for it gets damaged and worn with use and by the ravages of vermin, molds, and mildews. As it gets worn and damaged, it decreases in value and eventually becomes worthless. Thus, new currency must be fed into the system to replace that which is worn out and discarded. Feather currency is of absolutely no other use than as a medium of exchange, a standard of value, and as a means of storing wealth. It cannot be worn, it is not displayed, and it cannot be converted into any other usable form. From this it can be seen that it has all the properties of true money, yet it circulates as a commodity in a free market without regulation except for those forces created by supply and demand. Unlike our money, which we distinguish from commodities, feather currency has some of the properties of durable goods whose value depreciates over time. The original value of a piece of currency is determined by its size and the richness of its color when new. These criteria are reducible to the number of birds used and the amount of labor required for its construction. For an average piece today, about three hundred birds are necessary. The total labor required by all three specialties is roughly ten to eleven work weeks or about five hundred to six hundred and fifty man-hours. Depreciation of the currency is measured also by two criteria: the amount of red down worn off through handling and defects caused by insects and tropical growths. When the last bit of red disappears from the top surface, the currency becomes valueless and is thrown away.

In addition to the value as determined by the four criteria just mentioned, every piece of currency has its rarity value. This rarity value is always negotiated separately when currencies are exchanged, that is, when one piece is changed for two or more of lower value. The rarity value is an expression of how badly the purchaser of a highly valued piece wants it, and this, of course, is determined by its scarcity. It is a fact that the